



ALTERNATE REALITY

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alternatives

by Ron Melton

We have come to the parting of the ways, ALTERNATE REALITY can no longer function as both a moves zine and a SF zine. We have discovered that while it is fun to do, gamesmastering is not our bag, we are just no very good at it. Rather than inflict ourselves upon unsuspecting Diplomacy players, we are going to ease out of the gamesmastering. All games that we presently run will be carried to conclusion in THE BRIEFING ROOM. We will not be starting any new games, anyone who has sent us a game fee, please notify us if you desire a refund of your game fee, otherwise, the money will be applied to your subscription.

From now on, AR will appear monthly and will be devoted to SF, comics, movies and wargame articles and stories. The BR will be run as a mimeograph moves supplement mailed separately as soon as it is ready to those in games and included with AR for those not in games. BR will have a tri-weekly schedule as long as players get their moves in on time.

We have enjoyed this past year immensely and hope that you have also. We think that this next

MULTIGRAPHIX



year will be even better.

Those of you who are reading this have probably already noticed that we have changed format. Again. We hope that you also notice that this is in effect the longest issue of AR yet, containing as much as a 32 page mimeograph mag.

Some of you may wonder why we changed sizes again in the first place. Well, it has to do with the economics of printing, paper shortages and inflation but it is now cheaper to do it in this size rather than any of the other sizes we have used in the past.

We also like this size better.

Somewhere on this page or in this issue will be a quarter page cut and logo of our new project MULTIGRAPHIX. John Sullivan of San Jacinto, CA, will be working with us on this and it should be good, more about it next issue.

(Continued on page 15)

ISAIAH

Part II

by P. R. Forbes

The sun was high overhead when Isaiah reached the highway. Cars roared past occasionally; Isaiah watched them with great interest. Strange, noisy things they were--and very fast, he thought. What was the point of going so fast? He began walking along the road.

Around the bend he came upon one of the speed machines stopped at the roadside. A girl stood in the road trying to flag down one of the passing cars, while a bearded young man wrestled with something at the rear of the vehicle.

Isaiah drifted up behind the young man and looked over his shoulder. He was struggling with a strange metal device, and speaking to it in a loud vehement language. Isaiah recognized a few of the words; Zechariah had used them often, but never explained their meaning.

The young man uttered a howl of pain and dropped the device. "Damn, it smashed my finger! Oh damn it!" He uttered a whole string of colorful words, waving the injured digit madly. Isaiah moved back a little, as the young man jumped up.

"Shit, man, I give up! You can have it!"

Assuming that the remark was directed at him, Isaiah responded. "Thank you. But what is it for?" he asked.

"It's supposed to hold up the end of the f---ing car so you can change the f---ing flat tire!" The young man kicked the offending tire, then flopped across the hood nursing his sore finger.

"Davy don't talk like that!" The girl joined him looking discouraged. Cars zipped by without even slowing down. "How are we gonna fix the tire?"

Isaiah examined the device with curiosity. It was not as complicated as it had first seemed, and he soon understood how it worked and what was wrong with it. He corrected the problem and put the tool to work.

The young man bounded round the end of the car. "Great, great! Now we're going places!" He began changing the tire; Isaiah stood by and observed the process, lending assistance when needed. At last the job was done and the young man slammed the car trunk with enthusiasm.

"Thought we'd be stuck here all day! Thanks, pal."

"My name is Isaiah."

"I'm David Powell. That's my sister Sherry. We're headed for New York. Need a ride?"

Isaiah nodded. He had no idea what or where New York was, but he was willing to find out.

The three of them crowded into the front seat. The car was full of luggage, instruments in cases, sleeping bags, and unidentified items in boxes. Sherry dug a paper bag out of somewhere and offered it to Isaiah; it contained sandwiches and fruit. "Help yourself."

Isaiah selected an apple and settled himself as well as he could. These people and their ways were strange to him, but so far they had been friendly and generous; the vibrations were good. He wondered again why Zechariah had deemed other people untrustworthy. There were he decided many mysteries to study.

As they traveled, Isaiah learned more about his new companions. David and Sherry were a brother and sister folk-rock duo. They were travelling to New York to meet some friends, with the possibility of forming a new group.

David was a rapid fire talker who drove very fast with one eye on the road and one hand on the wheel while he illustrated his remarks. Sherry was quieter but very pleasant, and if her brother's driving habits made her nervous, she didn't show it.

"You're awfully quiet," she said to Isaiah. "Davy, give him a chance to say something!"

"O.K. Where're you from?" asked David.

"I lived on the mountain beyond the town of Kinks Crossing."

"A country boy, huh? Going anywhere in particular other than just New York?"

Isaiah shrugged. "I am going with you to New York. After that--I do not know. I would like to see what the world is like."

"New York is a good place to start. You can see a little of everything there."

The drive was a long one. Conversation grew sporadic, and eventually ceased. Sherry finally dozed off in her corner. Isaiah also seemed to be napping; in reality, all his senses were alert and receptive. Dusk was falling as they entered the city; and soon there was an overabundance of information to be evaluated.

Lights. Traffic. Noise. A helter-skelter confusion of machines and men crowding through the streets. Massive buildings looming on every side. Isaiah withdrew into himself, reducing the flow of stimulus. There was too much here to be absorbed all at once.

David turned the car off the main drag and followed a maze of side streets. At last he stopped before on

old house in the middle of a run down neighborhood.

"Is this the address Les gave us? 134 South Denton?"

"I think so," Sherry replied. "That looks like his old Dodge there." David honked his horn, and an attractive young black woman came to the door of the house.

"Come on in!" she called. "Bobby and Les have things all set up." Dave at once dug out two guitars and some other baggage; Isaiah helped carry the things in.

"The inside of the house had an unsettled look, with assorted instruments and odd pieces of furniture scattered about. "We've just moved in, and things aren't in place yet," explained the young woman.

David introduced Isaiah to Doris, the young woman, Les, her big, black husband, and Bobby, a pleasant, red haired young man. They readily accepted Isaiah as David and Sherry's friend.

"Hey, great!" said Bobby "Now we've got an audience."

"Well, what do you think I am?" asked Doris, with mock indignation.

"(C'mon, babe, you know you wouldn't be a fair critic," chided Les. "You're prejudiced in our favor."

"We'll see!" laughed Doris.

"Dave, Sherry, are you ready to go? Or are you too tired from the drive up?"

"Sherry had a nap on the way up, and I never get tired. Ready when you are!"

With laughter and joking talk, the group assembled. Music was passed around and studied, instruments were checked out. Les took his place at an upright piano; Bobby was on the drums. David and Sherry began improvising on their guitars. They went through a dozen tunes discussed them, took them apart, switched them around and started again.

"How do you like it?" asked Doris.

"It is very good," replied Isaiah. He was sitting cross-legged on the floor, totally fascinated.

At last Les called a halt to the session. "I'm starvin! Who wants to go get somethin to eat?"

David and Bobby elected to go with him and get burgers and shakes for all. They went out; the two girls disappeared into another room. Isaiah was left alone. He wandered about, touching the keys of the piano, examining the drums. He had carefully observed how each instrument was played.

At last he took up one of the guitars. This instrument had pleased him the most; there was something vaguely familiar about the music it made. As he fingered the strings, a tune came to him. Almost without thinking, he began to sing.

"An, gn, Ilissa ton verranu
Zar vanto missila a le vali,
Ivili iba elinto pentanu
Anana seba vorendo asi.
Felia ravina, selii talia,
Vala seressa ton elan zari,
Va to mobissa, vala ton perris
Vala ton zerrah verri."

"Hey, what is that? I don't understand the words, but I like it." Sherry stood in the doorway. "What does it mean?"

Isaiah raised troubled eyes to her. "I do not know. It--came to me." He toyed with the guitar again, but the strange words had already slipped from his mind. Vaguely disturbed, he put the instrument down.

The men returned boisterously, laden with Burger Hut's best. Isaiah tried a milkshake, but refused the Super-burger offered by Les. "I don't eat meat."

Les peered inside the sandwich. "Not that much meat in here. Mostly filler. Sure you don't want it?" Isaiah nodded, and Les ate the burger himself, along with his own Super-duper, fries, and shake. At six-foot-six he had plenty of room for everything.

After the meal came a long period of conversations. The friends had been apart for a while, and there was information and gossip to exchange. Isaiah did not understand all that they talked about, but he listened carefully and absorbed all that he could.

Eventually, Doris looked at her watch. "It's nearly one A.M.! I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm ready to turn in."

"One A.M.! You're right, Doris." Bobby jumped up. "I gotta go home and get some sleep. Classes tomorrow,"

After Bobby had left, Doris turned to Sherry and David. "You're spending the night here, right?" She paused. "Your friend, too?"

"I guess so. He was gonna stick around and see New York."

All Isaiah wanted was a couple of blankets and some space to himself. While David and Sherry were unrolling their sleeping bags, he settled down in a corner he had selected. His body relaxed easily, automatically. He was tired, and his mind was full. Only in sleep could he assimilate all he had learned this day.

That night the dream came to him again. Faces drifted through his mind; faded, then grew distinct. He knew them, or thought he did. They seemed to speak, but their words were not clear.

Scenes appeared in more and more detail. A small room—a living place. Two people, close together. A slender man with blue-grey hair. A small, dark-eyed woman with long, web-like pale hair. The man strummed a strange triangular instrument and sang to the woman.

The same tune—but now the words had meaning.

"Come, come, Missa, beloved one
Come with me, dearest, beyond the three moons.
Our hearts for all time shall be together
Our love will last longer than the stars.
Woman so beautiful, figure of grace
You who have given life to our son,
You sustain me, you are my hope,
You alone are my love."

A love song—and he was part of that love. He was a part of all this—but from a different viewpoint. All this was seen through the eyes of a child. Some of the scenes were vague; many ran together. New scenes began to appear—chaotic and disturbed.

Strange loud sounds. Urgent voices. A crowded space—was it a corridor? Blurred faces, figures rushing past. Fear. Confusion. Another place—very small, too small to be a room. Colored lights. What was happening? He could not understand.

Stars, millions of them, on every side. A white glow slowly fading, where a great space vehicle once had been. A man, woman, and child, drifting alone in a tiny craft. Ahead, a blue and white planet orbited by one natural satellite.

Time passed. The planet grew larger. Land masses became more distinct. Mountains and rivers, cities and towns came into view. But—power failing. Must land. Must land. No control. Ground coming up too fast. A crash. Fire, everywhere. The slender woman, her hair and clothes burning, clawing her way out, dragging the child to safety before collapsing. A small, terrified voice wailed over and over "pelo mini pelo mini father mother father mother..."

Hands reached out from somewhere, touched him, held him. "It's all right don't be afraid it's just a dream it's just a dream."

A measure of control returned to him. He knew the voice, it was Sherry. He was here in this house, in the present. He was in no danger. His trembling ceased; he opened his eyes.

Sherry was bending over him; behind her was a sleepy-eyed David. "Are you all right?" he queried. "You were cryin' like a little kid. What was wrong?"

"Do you want to talk about it?" Sherry asked gently. Isaiah shook his head. He was in control of himself now.

"All right. Go back to sleep. We'll be right here." Brother and sister returned to their sleeping bags.

Isaiah stared up at the ceiling and wondered what it was like to cry. He had seen it in the Bible; people wept when grief-stricken. Zeduniah had explored it to him, but he could not do it. Due to some difference in

his body chemistry, his eyes would not produce tears. As he lay in the darkness with his sadness, his face, as usual was calm; but his eyes fairly glowed with the pain he felt.

In his own way, Isaiah wept.

Isaiah woke the next morning to the smell of cooking food. Rising, he wandered into the kitchen. Dave and Sherry were at the table; Doris was scrambling eggs at the stove.

"Eggs? Bacon?" she offered. Isaiah shook his head and picked up a slice of toast. David poured him a glass of juice. "Where is Les?"

"He's gone out for a paper. Did you sleep all right—no more bad dreams?"

Isaiah hesitated, then nodded. Sherry pulled out a chair for him. "Can you talk about it now? You don't have to."

Isaiah sat down and was quiet for some time. "It was the memory of an accident," he said. "an accident in which my parents were killed. I was a child when it happened—the memory has never been so clear before."

"That must really have hurt you," murmured Sherry. Isaiah felt her sympathy strongly, and her sincerity. The vibrations were comforting; he was grateful.

The front door slammed and footsteps thudded through the house. Les appeared with a newspaper under his arm and a look of pure disgust about him.

"Don't tell me the news is that bad," chided Doris.

"Bad news, all right, but not in the paper. Heard this over the radio. Bobby's in the hospital. Some punks beat him up while he was walking home."

"Oh, no!" Doris dropped an egg on the floor.

"What kinda shape is he in?" asked David. "Can we go see him?"

"I dunno. I'll call the hospital and find out." Les disappeared again.

"Oh, poor, poor Bobby! What an awful thing to happen!" Sherry was really upset. David threw an arm around her.

"Buck up, sis. You can't keep a good drummer down. Help Doris clean up, O.K.? I want to talk to Les."

He went out and Sherry got up to assist Doris. Something made her glance over at Isaiah. He was sitting quietly in his place, looking utterly blank. "Why did this thing happen?"

"They probably wanted his money," said Doris.

"Then again, maybe they just felt like stompin' somebody!"

"Why?" There was real pain in the word. "Why hurt another man?" Do such things happen often here?"

Dave stuck his head into the kitchen. "The hospital says we can visit Bobby. Come on, we can all fit in Les' car."

Bobby was really a mess. One eye was swollen shut, his nose was broken, and he'd lost some teeth. In addition, he had three cracked ribs. "They kicked me around a little before they took my money. Five lousy bucks!"

"Dumb question number one. How're you feelin'?" asked Dave.

"I hurt like hell. They can't give me the usual painkillers 'cause of some allergy I've got. I'm on some weak stuff, and it's not much better than aspirin."

"Could ya identify the guys who did it?" asked Les.

"Going out for revenge? Uh-uh, Les." warned Doris.

"Who do I look like -- Shaft?" demanded Les. "I just wanna know."

Bobby tried to wet his lips. "It was dark. I couldn't see much. There were four guys--maybe five. Blacks and Mexicans, I think. But the leader was a Black dude, big as you, but with face fuzz and bushier hair. And yeah on a ring in one ear."

"Earring, huh? Big like me...." Les looked thoughtful and worried. After a minute, he went out, Doris followed.

"I guess I'll go get a Coke," said David. "You want one Sherry?...How about you, Isaiah?"

Isaiah shook his head no. "I will stay here."

After the others had left, Isaiah moved closer to the bed. Bobby's eyes were closed. He looked very tired, and under the bandage his face was creased with pain.

Very gently, Isaiah touched Bobby's forehead. He flinched as he felt the others' pain, then gingerly probed deeper.

---A ring of dark faces, jeering with hatred. Up against a wall, no place to go. A broken bottle snarls through the air, cutting an arm thrown out in defence. Then a hard fist out of somewhere smashing home. Fists and sticks everywhere, then merciless feet kicking stomping grinding....

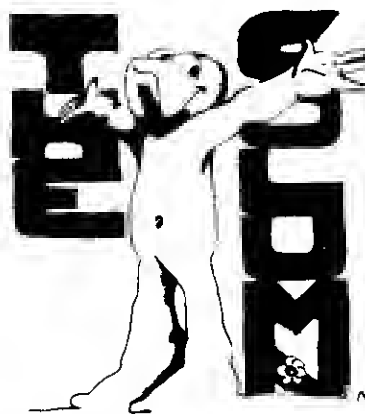
Isaiah surfaced, gasping. He had touched the mind of animals before but never that of man, and the things he saw there now sickened him. The cruelty that inflicted those wounds....

Bobby stirred restlessly. Isaiah shifted his contact--one hand on the forehead the other on the chest. After a few minutes, Bobby relaxed, his pain gone.

Isaiah drew back and looked at the now-sleeping figure. He did not know how or why he was able to ease the pain of others; but it was a good gift, and he was pleased to use it. Now even, there was still a bewilderment too; a sadness in him as he left the room.

Here there, after all, human serpents?

TO BE CONTINUED.



Barely got this in, as it is it's mostly index. It's been a whole year! About comix: Atlas is out but is destined to be a 'third' company if it keeps up the blabness. The only comix of its that is good all the way through is The Scorpion. They do have some good writers and wulf and their war comic show that. One that brings back memories of Spidey is the Destruct- or (Steve Ditko!)

It is heartily recommended for those who have read the araly Spiderman. Two other things to look into in the coming months are DC's Batman/Detective (steadily improving in plots and art) and Marvel's giant-size comix. Like the Man-thing, the Defenders, Master of Kung-Fu and Conan. And how could they cancel If?

And now-On the the Index!

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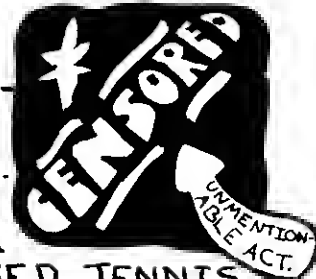
A DINKY TALE

BY DON MELTON AND MIKE RITTER. WARNING: DO NOT TRY TO FIND ANY MEANING IN THIS TALE. IT DOESN'T HAVE ONE (AT LEAST NOT ON THE SURFACE.) —



THE TOWN OF SCHMULTZ

NOTE: THIS IS THE STORY OF A YOUNG KID SOMETIMES CALLED OBOE (WE WON'T MENTION WHAT HE WAS CALLED OTHER TIMES) WHO, AFTER GROWING TO THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND BEING RECOGNIZED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS ABLE TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG IS BANISHED FOR AN UNMENTIONABLE CRIME THAT SOMEONE PERPETRATED UPON HIS MOTHER.

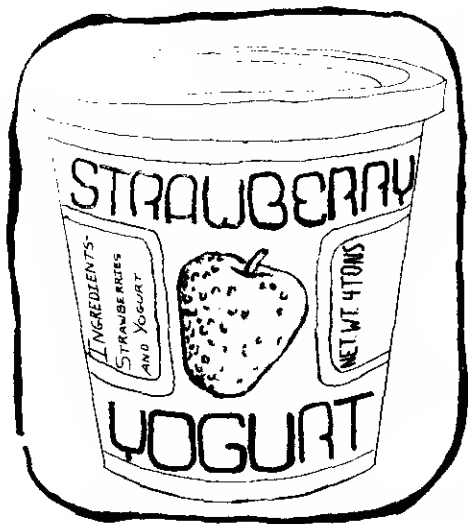


THE LITTLE KID IS KICKED OUT OF TOWN WITH ONLY WHAT HE HAS ON HIM AT THE TIME: A SHIRT, A PAIR OF PANTS, A SAFETY PIN HOLDING HIS FLY CLOSED, TENNIS SHOES, SOCKS, A DEANNIE CAP, A ROLLED UP COPY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES IN HIS RIGHT REAR POCKET, A BROKEN PENCIL, A BIC BANANA, TWELVE CENTS IN CHANGE, (ONE NICKEL, ONE THURPENCE, THREE PENNIES) AND A DEAD TOAD IN HIS FRONT RIGHT POCKET, SEVENTEEN PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY SANDWICHES AND HIS HAND IN HIS FRONT LEFT POCKET, AND NOTHING IN HIS REAR LEFT ONE. OH YES, HE ALSO WALKED OUT OF THE TOWN OF SCHMULTZ WITH A DISGRUNTLED LOOK.

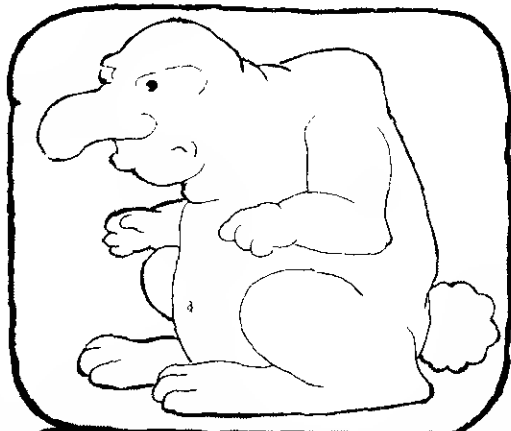


THE LITTLE KID IS KICKED OUT ON THE SEVENTEENTH OF APRIL (THE SEVENTEENTH OF APRIL BEING THE OFFICIAL KICKING OUT TIME FOR SONS OF UNMENTIONABLE DOERS, ALSO BEING IT THAT THERE WERE NO HOLIDAYS ON THE TWO DAYS BEFORE (SO THEY WERE SOBER (ALSO NO INCOME TAX DEADLINE, NICE PLACE FOR ADULTS, THE TOWN OF SCHMULTZ WAS.)))



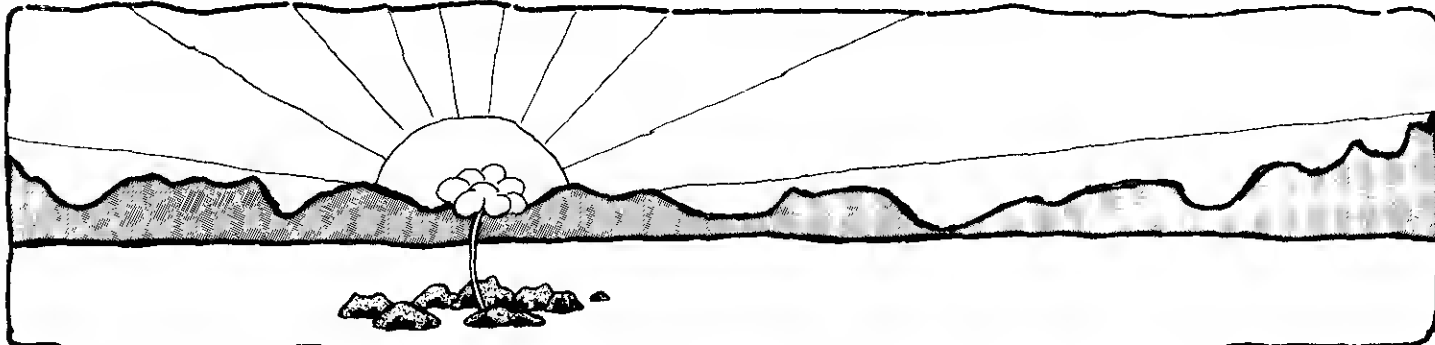


HE WAS CONSU-
MATELY ADVISED
THAT HE WOULD
BE HENCEFORTH
BANISHED FOR-
EVER UNLESS HE
COULD PROOVE
HIS MANHOOD (AND
THEY WOULDN'T
TAKE WHAT HAD
HAPPENED TO BET-
TY MAE AS PROOF.)
TO PROOVE HIS MAN-
HOOD HE WAS TOLD



THE REAL THING

OGURT IN THE BLACK FOREST, THE LONELY OGURT,
STANDING LIKE A SINGLE DANDELION IN A FIELD OF
STONES. SINCE MANY HAD TRIED TO GET RID OF THE
OGURT AND NONE HAD SUCCEEDED (OBVIOUSLY
SINCE HE'S STILL THERE LIKE THE LONELY DANDE-
LION) THE TOWN OF SCHMULTZ EXPECTED TO BE RID
OF THE LITTLE BRAT... UH... OBOE HAD MORE IN
HIM THAN SCHMULTZ COULD EVER HAVE REALIZED,
HE HAD POTENTIAL. HE COULD BE ANYTHING



HE WANTED TO BE UNLESS HE DIED FIRST OR
CAUGHT THE MEASLES OR CONTINUED EATING
THOSE PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY SANDWICHES
WHICH WERE
VERY RAPID-
LY BECOMING
RANCID. BUT
HE DID HAVE
POTENTIAL, AT
LEAST HE HAD
THE CLASS TO
ADMIT THAT
HE DID HAVE
POTENTIAL.



POTENTIAL

CHAPTER 20: OBOE SEEKS ADVENTURE.

ON THE FIRST AFTERNOON
OBOE WASN'T AFRAID
AT ALL, IN FACT HE
WAS KIND OF GLAD TO
GET AWAY FROM HIS
MOTHER. SO OBOE
WAS WALKING
DOWN THE AVE-



NUE WITH A SMILE. HE KNEW ALL ABOUT
QUESTS AND MANHOOD. HE DECIDED TO
GO LOOKING FOR EXCITEMENT AND HE FELT
LIKE HE COULD LICK THE WORLD, MAYBE.

OBOE HAD BEEN WALKING FOR HOURS AND HIS FEET WERE GETTING SORE SO HE STARTED LOOKING FOR HIS FIRST WIERD CHARACTER TO MEET AND BOY WAS THE FIRST ONE EVER A CHARACTER. HE WAS DRESSED IN RED WITH A CAP THAT ENDED IN A TASSLE, A SCRAGGLY WHITE BEARD, CARRIED A SACK OF TOYS ON HIS BACK AND SAID "HO, HO, HO." A LOT. (NO, HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY REINDEER.) WHEN



WORD
BAL-
LOON

CAN
I HAD A
EATHER
EGG?



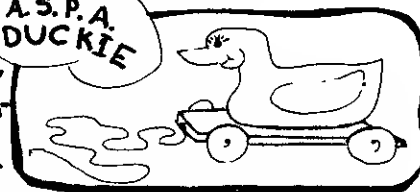
OBOE SAW THIS WIERDO COMING DOWN THE STREET

HE THOUGHT "OHBOYOHBOYOH-BOY!" HERE CUMS THE EATHER BUNNY. MY FIRTH ADVENTHURE WOW!" HE RAN UP TO SAMMY AND SAID "CAN I HAD A EATHER EGG?" "HECK NO!" SAID SAMMY CLAWS, "BUT I'LL GIVE YOU ONE OF MY SPECIAL SUPER DELUXE ARMY SURPLUS PULL

ALONG DUCKS TYPE 'E'." "WHUTS A ARMEE SURPWUS PULL-A-WONG DUCKY?" ASKED OBOE.

"HERE KID" SAID SAMMY CLAWS WHO THEN TROTTED AWAY MUTTERING, "HARRUMPH, I JUST GOTTA GET ME SUMMA DEM REIN- DEER." OBOE KNEW THAT THINGS WERE GETTING VERY STRANGE BUT

A.S.P.A.
DUCKIE

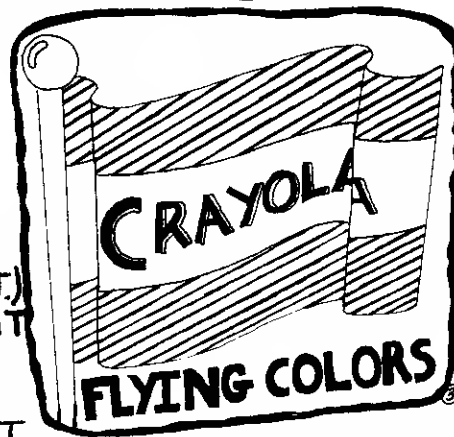
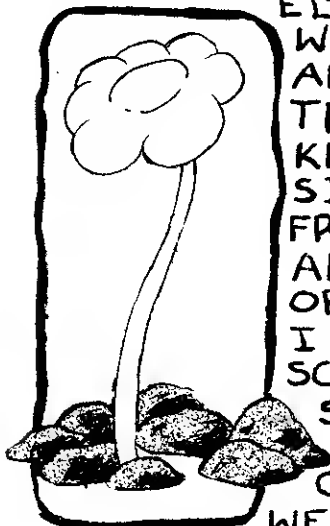


THEN ANYTHIG CAN HAPPEN IN A COMIC BOOK. OBOE STARED AT HIS NEW DUCKY AND GAVE IT A KICK WHICH CAUSED IT TO SQUEAK OUT, "QUACK, QUACK. I AM A DUCKIE. WHO DO YOU PRESUME TO BE?" "HUH?" SAID OBOE. AND QUICKLY TAKING COMMAND OF THE SITUATION GRABBED THE DUCKIE'S STRING AND PULLED HIM ALONG BEHIND, MENACINGLY. "WELL." HE THOUGHT, "I PATHED THAT TETH WITH FWYING COWORS. WHUT- EDER FWYING COWORS HABEN TO BE." (OBOE WAS IGNORANT ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS

AND LANGUAGE HAPPEND TO BE ONE OF THEM. HE DIDN'T EVEN

KNOW THAT THE EXPRES- SION "FLYING COLORS" CAME FROM THE EARLY (c. 1920) ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN OF CRAYOLA CRAYONS BUT I DON'T KNOW IT EITHER SO I GEUSS IT'S ALL RIGHT.)

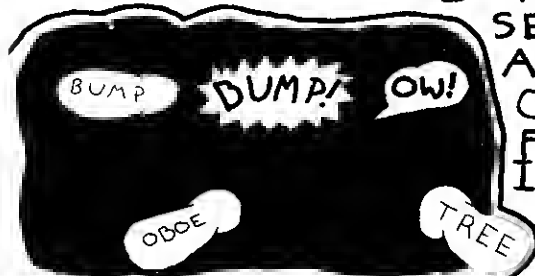
SO OBOE IGNORANTLY WENT ON. HE WALKED ON AND ON AND ON AND THEN HE WENT FURTHER AND HE GOT



HOMESICK AND HE WAS AFRAID OF THE DARK (THE SUN HAD JUST SET) AND HE WAS BECOMING FRIGHTENED. AND WHAT ABOUT THE LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS AND OH MY! HE CONTINUED WALKING ON AND FEELING SORRY FOR HIMSELF BECAUSE HE HADN'T SEEN THE EATHER BUNNY AND HE WAS LONELY. HE WAS LIKE A DANDELION IN A FIELD OF STONES. AND THEN IT STARTED BEING REALLY, REALLY DARK. OBOE GOT REALLY FRIGHTENED. WHEN HE TURNED AROUND HE COULDN'T SEE HIS SPECIAL SUPER DELUXE ARMY SURPLUS PULL ALONG DUCKY, OR HIS HAND IN FRONT OF HIS FACE OR THE LONELY DANDELION. IT DEFINITELY WAS DARK. OBOE WAS SO TIRED THAT HE COULD HARDLY STAND SO HE KEPT ON FALLING DOWN AND THAT MADE HIM CRY, EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN'T WANT

GEE!
IT'S DARK

QUACK.
QUACK.



OBOE BUMPS INTO TREE

TO. FINALLY HE CALLED OUT FOR HIS MOTHER "I WANT MY EATHER BUNNY!" SINCE HE COULDN'T SEE WHERE HE WAS GOING OBOE RAN SMACK INTO A TREE AND BUMPED HIS HEAD AND DID THAT EVER HURT. SO HE JUST NESTLED DOWN IN THE ROOTS OF A TREE WHICH STOOD LIKE A LONELY DANDELION ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST AND CRIED HIMSELF TO SLEEP.



THE GODS
SMILE DOWN UPON THE KID.

AND HE LOOKED SO INNOCENT DOWN THERE (FORGETTING BETTY MAE) THAT THE GODS LOOKED DOWN ON OBOE AND FELT PITY IN THEIR HEARTS FOR HIM. THEY VOWED HE WOULD GROW UP SOME THE NEXT DAY AND NOT CONTINUE TO BE AFRAID OF THE DARK BY OVERCOMING A "TEENY-WEENY" CHALLENGE. IF OBOE HAD KNOW THIS HE WOULD HAVE MADE NUMEROUS ITALIAN GESTURES AT THE GODS BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW SO HE JUST SLEPT ON VERY PEACEFULLY.



JUDGEMENT DAYS

Evening Candle

by Patricia Lee Robbins

Three stories on similar themes were submitted to me in the same week. They all three deal with God and Judgement in their own ways. They are also all pretty good. Rather than print only one because of the similarity in themes, I decided to print all three under a single heading. REM

Dawn was a remorseless aftermath to an evening spent in clinging fear. Cold morning winds blew grey feathery clouds and spectral masses of litter across the moribund landscape without conviction. Traffic signals changed regularly at intersections, oblivious to the fact that no motorvehicle had moved in the city for three days. Brightly lighted office buildings flaunted their demeaning fluorescent glory against that of the sun's tawdry flame.

Women scurried through the streets carrying evil-looking weapons along with their purses. Children stood alone under lamp posts clutching toy animals, the bright furs dirtied by days in the streets. The children's eyes looked baffled or softly cried. Men, gathering in small groups as for protection, hummed tuneless melodies, smoked aimlessly or listened to random radio broadcasts, fearing to hear news of more land sinking into the sea, a new hellstorm, plague or ecologic catastrophe. Some wept openly among their fellows, fearing to leave them.

"Errr," said Marlaine. She closed the window and drapes.

"Anything new?" asked Dea from the other room.

"Not really, more people in the streets, more businesses closed. I'm afraid if this keeps up the women will begin to loot."

"Nobody'd care."

"I know, and it's sad in a way...."

"Walk?"

"Why not?"

"Coats?"

"If you want to, I won't."

They walked through the demented city shunning the crowds which gathered in open spaces. Later, walking into the warehouse section by the sea, they smelled a strange new scent in the wind. They made their way onto the beach and looked at the fearsome creation the sea had become.

"It looks like blood," said Dea.

"It is," said Marlaine after a close examination.

"Let's get away from here, it smells horrid."

Throughout the long afternoon they walked through the city's misty grayness. They dined on hot tea and salad in a restaurant near the park which, surprisingly, was still open.

At sunset the power died. Men built fires of books and furnishings. Ethereal sounds of death screams filled the night mingling with the music of breaking glass.

Throughout the merciless night they sat in a church listening to a society die and watching the people who shared their vigil.

At first light Marlaine took a sliver of glass from one of the windows and made the required Pentagrams in a silver offering bowl. When the first rays of sun sent their mournful light into the sparkling new ruin, Dea made the Sign.

He appeared before them.

"Help the people," they said.

And so He did, smiling as an old man who was ready for sleep, he snuffed out the sun as though it were an evening candle....

the Tomorroweepers.

by Richard Knights and Harry McAlister

And, on a sun-sparkled morning, in a place and century that were both many dreams away, there came a thunder that could well have been the voice of God, whispering "Prepare yourselves. The end is near."

Jeannie was gently toweling herself. dry, having just finished bathing in a deserted, warm public bath. At her feet, drenching in the water that was dripping from her body, stood a little orange ball of whirring clicks, waiting, patiently, for some order. She handed her towel to it.

"TKO," she asked, "did you see or hear anything?"

"Affirmative," the ornage clicker replied.

The girl looked concerned. "Might rain," she said.

They walked outside together and heard another doom knell. "I'm coming!" the black clouds screamed, "My court is set!"

The girl and her robot stepped out into the empty street.

"You're sure this town is empty?" the girl inquired.

"Affirmative."

"Good," Jeannie replied, "I'm beginning to

dislike populated areas. The last town said I consorted with devils!"

"Affirmative."

"Hey, are you stuck?"

"Negative."

"Not long now," the thunder cried, "Not long at all."

"I can't believe anyone would say anything like that about me!"

"Words are just words." TKO stated, with a whirr, "They have no power to change what is so."

"Oh yeah? Try to prove that to those old women back in New Dallas."

"Your joke was unappreciated."

"Unappreciated? It was downright disastrous!"

"Mocking the unknown is not wise."

"Well how was I to know that Poland was considered to be their holy land?"

"Loose ships sink ships."

"Shut TKO"

The rain began. Soon it was coming down in such torrents that it looked like a solid plastic sheet.

"And I had to go and take a bath! Why didn't you tell me it was going to rain?"

"Weather prediction is beyond my capabilities."

The sky pointed an ominous, black finger at them. "Listen to me!" it screamed, "I am coming! Judgement day is coming!"

"Hey, is this thing going to get any worse?" (The entire earth was shaking now.)

"Probability would not dictate so."

"Thanks."

And within moments, as if TKO had access to some hidden tap, the storm began to abate.

The air filled itself with the chirps and cracks and sparkles that are omnipresent after a thunder storm. The warmth of the golden sun countered the chilling breeze and the sky underneath took on a counter-fade to blue.

"I'm wet," Jeannie said, "and cold."

"Suggestions are in order, as follows: fire, shelter, alcohol, human nearness,..."

"Great. And just how are we to go about find-

ing these things?"

"Data insufficient. Suggest further exploration."

And they did explore further. And they walked along the grassy edge of a forest. And they did, in time, find a shelter and build a small fire.

And all this time, someone, somewhere, laughed at them, softly and good-naturedly, and said, "Not yet, children, not quite yet. Sleep safely tonight..."

"Maybe tomorrow..."

the 8th day.

by Big George O. Deal

Once upon a time God came down to Earth and landed near a big college in the eastern part of the United States of America where he turned himself into a large, towering Slippery Elm tree. "He had better watch out," remarked one man who was watching, "there's a lot of Dutch Elm disease in this area and He's likely to catch it if He isn't careful. There were a lot of other people milling about to watch God catch Dutch Elm Disease and they applauded this statement. There were even a few baseball pitchers looking to cut off a small slice of Slippery Elm to use to pitch Spitters. This was very illegal but then so is Eating garlic in Massachusetts on Sunday after Noon, everyone does it anyway. "I want everyone to gather around me," the Slippery Elm boomed loudly and if you think it's easy for an elm tree to boom loudly, you had better think again. Since it was God and everyone was there anyway They all crowded around. People started to pop up magically from just everywhere. Some of them were in very embarrassing positions, too. Even The President of the United States of America flew in on his own private, government-supplied Plane. All of the planes that had taken off from All of the airports turned back and circled the Huge Slippery Elm. Even the plane with the dread BOMB came and circled it. The all night Jack-in-the-Box closed up so all of its employees could go and see God. However, there was one Meany in Uganda that refused to come. He was the Ugandan Minister of Internal Affairs and Media Relations. He went and issued a statement that if God and/or the Slippery Elm wanted to see him, He would have to drag him there because he would not go any other way. This got the Slippery Elm kind of mad, so He boomed a few words and the Meany up and vanished. The Meany's wife vanished. His kids disappeared. His house, his block, and His town disappeared. His county disappeared. His next larger political subdivision just vanished. His whole country got up, went poof, and was no longer there. Every last piece of dirt that used to be part of Africa disappeared in a silent explosion and the oceans poured Noisily into the gaping hole that was left, Lowering sea level by over two hundred feet. The Crowd oohed and awed with delight and one guy had the audacity to comment about it by making a pun And a bad one at that. "That's God, by God!" he said and promptly vanished. The crowd instantly shut up. "All right, pay attention," the Slippery Elm boomed. "Would Aatemush Absa Aaron Please stopup? And be quick about it!" Aatemush Stepped up and looked decently petrified. "You Go over there," said the Slippery Elm, pointing with a branch. "Aatemush Basil Aaron, please. You go over to the other side." This continued All day and it could be seen that God was going to divide humanity into two groups. A lot of Arguments could be heard going on over which of

The two groups was the more self-righteous And/or religious. The group on one side would Point out that they had the President and the Group over on the other side would argue that That didn't mean a thing. The sun had started To set and the booming Slippery Elm was only up To the 'R's and He was in a hurry and getting Touchy so He told this little kid to go over There when his parents had come over here. "No!" The little brat screamed, "I won't go!" and he Proceeded to have a temper tantrum. The Slippery Elm looked very flustered and its leaves even Began to turn a bright shade of yellow which was Pretty to look at but showed He was getting fed Up, and quickly. The parents saw this and stood Up, "Do what Mr. Elm says, honey." Their next Door neighbor and closest friend stood up and Indignantly said, "I never liked the brat anyways But I think You ought not to separate families up This way." "How dare you question Me!" and the Slippery Elm turned livid with rage and Disappeared that neighbor in the flash of an eye And the blink of an instant, but He wasn't Prepared for what happened next. Individuals in The crowd started hollering defiantly at Him so He vanished them. This made more people protest, And vanish. Even the pilot of the plane with the BOMB protested and vanished. The dreaded BOMB Exploded: not too many people were around to watch It though. Finally, only the huge, towering Slippery Elm tree and the brat who was having a Temper tantrum were left. Nobody in the whole World was there to watch. "Get over there." Mr. Elm boomed, "or I'll make a pair of duplicates to Take your place, and they'll be better behaved, For sure." "No!! I won't go and You can't make Me!" "Oh, NO?!!" the Slippery Elm screamed, "I'll just disappear You like I did the others!" "You'd better not because I'm the only one Keeping You alive and if I disappear no one will Believe in You and You'll disappear, too and I Never really believed in a Mr. Elm, anyways. It's just kid stuff. So there!!" "I never Thought of it quite that way." "I'll hold my Breath and turn blue and die if You threaten me!" "Uh...don't do that, please...pretty, please?" "I will if You don't get my mommy and daddy back!" "Uh...I...uh...can't. (Gulp)." "Oh, well, I Never liked them very much anyways. Get Me some Cookies instead, I'm hungry." And off ran the Huge towering Slippery Elm tree into the sunset To get some cookies for the Little Kid because He Was hungry. And the evening and the morning were The eighth day. Hallelujah, brothers, so it goes.

(The Column-continued from page 6)

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DRYAD

by Richard Knights

It took Daemion quite a few months to even begin to master the "finger language" of the Torans, but he found it well worth the time.

The Torans were a good people, and despite their inability to converse verbally, an intelligent one. They had advanced science, medicine, architecture, and their language, "Torase," was much more practical than ancient signing techniques Daemion had read about during his years in Library.

The Torans, on the other hand, saw Daemion as something special. He was bigger than they were for one thing, standing over a head taller than most of them. For another he was a shining example of what the Torans called "primitive man," complete with guttural speech, unusual customs, and impulsive emotionalism.

Most of his needs were taken care of through Karra, the huntress he'd met soon after his emergence "outsida," even though she shouldn't have known what he needed any more than her peers. Still, she seemed to know, almost instinctively, when and what it was that would aid Daemion's comfort, and how to get it for him.

And once Daemion had Torase well in hand (a pun he used quite often but which nobody else really understood) he discovered his learning experience only just beginning. For one thing he learned that the Torans were descended from one of the few colonies of human beings that had survived the disaster locked in suspended animation, and their inability to speak stemmed from a brain-damaging factor involved in the primitive freezing techniques that man in the twentieth century had either not foreseen or foolishly attempted to hide. The speech centers of their brains were permanently destroyed. How this became a genetic defect, Daemion later discovered, was a subject of much controversy. Although almost everyone had their own ideas, nobody was exactly sure what had happened. There were those who liked to believe that the bomb, in one way or another, was responsible, and others who preferred to blame the "ice-chambers. Daemion, himself, thought that these targets were just too easy and suspected an as yet unseen culprit. He was too find, many years later, that he was right.

Karra however, had no opinions. She understood little, if any, of this talk. She was a huntress, not a scientist. All she knew was how swing a sword, fire a gun, dagger-wrestle, and if the need ever arose, handle a bow competently. Why she spoke Torase as opposed to English didn't interest her. She began spending proportionately less time with Daemion as he spent more time with the Toran scientists and educators.

Daemion learned quickly that the Torans hated and feared any devices of a mechanical nature, and any advance in technology that might enable them to build one. Machinea, they reasoned, were the death knell of mankind. They did not want to begin that way again.

* * *

Daemion stayed in the Toran village for almost six months, learning all he could about this strange new Earth (which the inhabitants liked to call "Urth II"), and in turn answered questions about his own race and their greyish skin-hue and lack of hair. Then he decided to leave and continue his search for a dragon. Bidding a clumsily-fingered farewell to the little people, he lifted the huge food pack they had given him and set off.

The morning air, to Kara, was as sweet as bee's honey, as cool as the mountain streams, and as soft as her bed at night. She loved sitting on the hill above the village and watching the sun rise. It was strange how the village, such an ugly blemish

on nature, looked so beautiful in the early hours of day. The only other attraction it held for her was the tavern on certain nights when she could lay her sword and blood aside and drink and entertain herself with man and forget that hunters were considered savages there. Necessary evils, rape-bait, if she ever dared lay her sword too far aside. The villagers knew what hunters were as well as she did. Warmongers. Killers of any game that eluded capture, including other hunters. The villagers realized that such morbid activities could begin new wars but their was little they could do about it. Hunters were important, as important, perhaps, as farmers and marketers. Without one of those groups, most of the Toran population would starve.

Karra remembered watching the "fencing" contests her father had participated in on many festival days. She was first allowed to witness these matches after her first kill, when she was only four years old. From that day forward she made it her duty to carry the news of her father's latest win, as soon as the win had been accomplished, home to her mother who was not a huntress and was therefore banned from the games.

At first, of course, there were no kills. Wins and losses were determined by points, and to so much as strike an opponent with the blunt of one's sword would result in the removal of twenty-five points from one's score.

And then when Karra was about eight, gladiatorism was invented. Fight to the kill. Karra's father did not return to the games again. There were times when he spoke of doing so, but before the opportunity arose, something happened.

Karra's father was killed in a land dispute. Nothing like this had ever happened in Toran history but it was destined to happen many times again.

Karra and her mother moved to a less crowded area and began to associate less with other hunters and more with the villagers. And when her mother died, Karra even took to drinking in local taverns rather than be caught sleeping alone in the woods by some ambitious hunter who would as soon slay her as any beast that would bring a half-fair price at the market.

And that was where she was that morning. Sitting on the hillside, feeling the first warm caress of morning sunlight and watching the frightened shadows slip from view. That was how she saw the beginning of Daemion's flight. A whole mob of villagers swarmed around him but his high, bald head was easily recognizable. She wondered where he was going. He'd never left the village before.

From the pack slung over his shoulder it would seem that his leaving was to be more or less permanent. But what was there outside the village that would attract such a man?

Anything, she found herself answering. He was a strange man, attractive in a near-alien sense, and totally fascinating. He was good with a sword, yet he seemed to prefer the company of scientists to that of hunters and steel-smiths. And his trapping and hunting skills, quite frankly, were abominable. They were also self-parodies and quite fun to watch.

Curious, she just suddenly thought of how boring things would be without him. She was actually going to miss that clumsy, hairless giant!

She watched as her people left Daemion at the edge of their village and her eyes followed him towards the Forest of the Sorceress.

Forest of the Sorceress? Hadn't somebody warned the stupid fool? Even if he was the most skillful swordsman on Urth II, something he certainly was not; despite the fact that he'd bait her once, it was doubtful that he'd be able to challenge the

things of the forest and survive! Blast them anyway!

She sighed angrily. She supposed she would have to follow him now and keep him alive if he got his pelt in trouble. Not that there was anything keeping her here! No! She could hardly wait to get away from these cut-throats and thieves. Besides, this guy was going to need some help if he was ever going to kill that 'dragon', or whatever it was.

She stood, placing her hand on her sword, looking forward to whatever challenge lay in that devil's world. It was as if, after all these years in an unwanted womb, she was finally being born.

Daemion could appreciate the cool shadows of the forest, especially after those many months in direct sunlight which had blistered his skin and painfully blinded him. The coolness of the trees seemed welcome enough.

(Where's he going, thought Karra, if he keeps going in that direction very long he'll wind up right on her doorstep! How could he be so stupid? She drew her sword.)

Daemion was already thinking about lunch. There really wasn't much else to think about, save for the journey, and since he couldn't really tell how long the trek would take, that subject was also rather limited.

(This was too much! He was almost within sight of her much-fabled house! No. No, this had gone far enough. If nobody else felt even a little responsibility for the giant, Karra at least did. It was obviously up to her to stop the fool before he ended up killing himself.)

Ah, the birds. He had read poet's much detailed descriptions of their sweet, shrill song but no definition, no matter how intricately written, could ever hope to match their song. It was a poetry in itself. The melody, perhaps, to a symphony. A symphony that assailed the eyes as well as the ears. A symphony for the soul.

He stopped. Somebody was playing off-key! He was being attacked from behind. Like a blade of lightning came his sword, reflected sunlight arcing off of it, launching from its scabbard like a missile, exploding with reflected sunlight into a rainbow of colors as he turned to face his aggressor. Too late. He heard the air curl around his attacker's flying form. He felt the wrist of his sword hand grabbed and twisted behind his back. He felt his knees buckle and, half-a-painful eternity later, he felt the ground slam into his back and his attackers soft, light form come to rest atop him.

It was the Toran huntress.

"What in the name of heaven are you doing, girl?"

Swiftly, Karra began to manipulate her fingers into intricate and beautiful forms, forms that could easily be read, Daemion reasoned, by anyone who could follow such quickly passing designs. He, unfortunately, could not.

"What?"

Her reaction was quick and readily understood. Her forefinger darted to his face, crossing his lips in a 'shh' position. Universal, to even a voiceless people. She wanted him silent.

She began again, slowly, only a few letters at a time, as if she was speaking to a child. She never finished communicating her thought however. Something else was watching.

Arustle in the brush.

Daemion rolled over, throwing Karra from him and grasping his grounded sword in the same move-

ment. A second later "Something else" emerged.

She was definitely not a huntress. Her build was rather frail for such labor, and besides, she had no sword! She was also not Toran. Her hair was black, for one thing. (And all Torans, he'd been quick to notice, were light haired.) For another, she did not quite give the illusion of being Toran. She seemed independent somehow, a more natural creature than the Torans.

And besides, Karra was afraid of her.

At the first sight of her, the powerful, blonde sword-slinger scampered off into the bushes like a frightened mouse.

Daemion rose cautiously. He wanted her to be prepared in case she saw fit not to return the favor. Strangely enough, even though she was weaponless she seemed quite able to cause all sorts of destruction.

He signaled a greeting to her, one to which she did not respond. He began again, adding, this time, the question of identity.

"You know," she replied, "You're really not very good at that."

It is hard to tell which dropped farther, Daemion's eyes or his lower jaw.

"I'll understand if you just speak to me, providing you can speak English, of course."

"I...I can."

"Good. Then this should speed up communications on your end a great deal. Your name is..." she stared, not at him, but into him, stabbing him with her eyes. "Daemion, am I right?"

"Who are you?"

"My name is Roxanne. I'm a sorceress."

"Why is Karra afraid of you?"

"They're all afraid of me."

"Who?"

"The Torans, of course."

"Why?"

"Because I am a sorceress. A mutant, of sorts. A child of the bomb. They call me Dryad, forest witch."

"What have you done that would cause them to fear you?"

"Nothing, really. The things, making vapor condense into rain. I have actually done more to save their village from things like starvation and attacks from the unknown than they would want to know about."

"Why?"

The girl shrugged, "Something to do. But what about your friend?"

Daemion glanced over his shoulder. "I think," he said, "she's afraid of you."

Roxanne nodded her head in agreement. "Easily remedied."

The girl then did something which seemed rather uncanny: she began to concentrate and even as her eyes began to close, everything stopped. The songs of the birds, the soft wind, everything. She raised her fingers gently to her temples.

"Karra," she whispered, although it sounded more like a shout in the eerie silence, "Karra, it's all right. There's nobody to hurt you here. Come out, Karra. Come out and meet a friend."

Slowly, even though she couldn't have understood all the words; the huntress did emerge from her covering, being careful to keep her sword before her at all costs, and walked up to within a few feet of the sorceress.

Then Roxanne opened her eyes and trained them on those of the Toran girl.

"Are we friends?"

Karra nodded.

"Then why do you need this?" the other asked, running her gentle fingers down the mute's cold steel blade.

Karra sheathed it. And, as she did, Daemion felt a new breeze caress his back, and the birds began to sing again.

"How did you know our names?" Daemion asked at length.

"I'm a sorceress," was the reply.

"How much else do you know about us?"

"A little. Mostly those things that are upmost in your minds. For instance, I know that your greatest desire, at this time, is to find and slay a dragon."

"You know? Tell me, have you ever seen one of the creatures?"

"In my lifetime I've seen a million dragons. They were not the variety you're searching for, but they're real. Very...real."

"My dragons, the type I'm searching for, do they exist?"

"Perhaps somewhere. I really don't know."

"Well, what do you think?"

"Follow your stars, Daemion. Even though it's only a glint in space, follow it. Man's courage never shines as bright as when he reaches for the heavens."

"That tells me nothing."

"It wasn't meant to. That would take all the fun out of it."

Daemion glanced around.

"If I go north, what will I find?"

"Many things. Mutants of all varieties. Giants, vampires, plague things...perhaps a dream or two."

"Did you say you were a sorceress, or a poet?"

Roxanne laughed.

"Many times I think you'll find the two words are synonymous."

Daemion, disgusted with this "riddle-talk", slid his sword into its sheath and started towards the north.

"Wait!"

He turned.

"I think you'll find a couple of guides useful."

"A couple?"

Roxanne looked at Karra.

"Your friend here wants to come too."

It was a snap decision, the kind that one makes and then forever wonders about.

Daemion signalled them forward.

"Where to first?" Daemion asked, after their first hour of travel.

"First to the hills of Algonire, the giant."

"Or."

The three fragile figures dissolved into the misty forest sunlight, and into the soft, shrill sounds of sunset.

Our National Heritage

by Greg Costikyan

K'Reenoch, the genetically altered eagle, Professor of Law at N'Yawk University, sat in the Teacher's lounge, leaning his frail wooden chair against the wall. Through the wall, he felt a slight vibration. Keening his senses to their utmost, he managed to make out the words of the people in the room behind him.

"Christ, K'Reenoch is a real bastard. He kept us nearly a half-hour after class today, and then gave us a twenty-page assignment."

"I know what you mean. The bald worm really gets me. I wrote a paper the other day which would have gotten an 'A' in any other class, but K'Reenoch, you know, he doesn't like me, so he gave me an 'F'."

"Well, he's that type of person. As sharp as an Eagle's claw." The speaker laughed as did his two companions.

"Well, you know, we don't have to put up with it."

"What do you mean? What can we do?"

"Well, he's only a near person."

"So?"

"It's only a misdemeanor to kill a near person."

"Yeah, but he's a prof. In loco parentis, and all that."

"Doesn't matter. Gather 'round..."

K'reenoch sat his chair sharply upright. He looked unusually pale, even for an eagle person. "Oh my God," he thought, "They're going to kill me."

He sat for several minutes, then; "Yes, let's see. The voices..." He leaned back against the wall once again.

"Look, we get one of those telephone wire fixing things, you know, one of those things with the extendable cockpit-like thingie, and then, with the cockpit-thingie extended, one of us rides past with a shotgun, and fires through the window of his classroom, then speeds off."

"That's a stupid idea. We've got to come up with something better than that."

"Yeah listen, suppose we get a couple of..."

K'Reenoch had heard enough. His chair came upright once more. "McKinley, Roston Jones, and Grodnoff. Very good."

* * * * *

The three young men heard a hammering on the door.

"Open up! It's the police!"

They looked at each other confusedly. "Anybody done anything?" Grodnoff said.

"Well, I got a little stoned last night, with that stuff of Henrik's, but nothing to warrant this."

"Open up before we bash in the door!"

"Well then, we've got nothing to lose." Jones opened the door.

"Thank you," said the police man as he walked in, three other officers of the law following, and K'Reenoch behind. "You are Joseph McKinley, Ivan Grodnoff, and Roston Jones?"

"Yes."

"You are under arrest, the three of you. I must advise you of your rights. You..."

"Wait a minute," said McKinley. "What's the charge?"

K'Reenoch spoke up. He smiled, pointed to his bald pate, and said, "Conspiracy to kill a bald eagle."

(Alternatives-continued from page 2)

John's friend Reuben Munoz did our cover this week and we really dig it, we hope you do, also. Maybe we can get him or John to do next issues cover if a bunch of you write in and tell us that you like it.

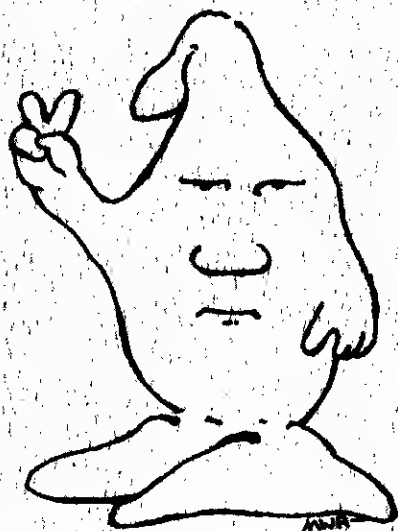
Also in this issue, you should find the second part of P.R. Forbes "Isaiah," which looks like it may turn out to be five to seven parts long; a triplet of stories by three (no, four) authors called "Judgement Days;" two other stories; THE Column; a bibliography of the first volume of AB; an article or two if we have room; AND four pages of an illustrated story by Mike Ritter and Don Melton. They intend to do four pages an issue until they reach some sort of conclusion but since the tale is pointless, it may never end.

ALTERNATE REALITY

ALTERNATE REALITY

621 Main St.

El Centro, CA 92243



Diplomacy World
% Walter Buchanan
RR3
Lebanon, Ind, 46052

IMPERIAL MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

THE Briefing Room



February 22, 1975

Send moves to Mike Ritter, 332 West J, Brawley CA
714 344-1589 92227

I am finally getting this alltogether with almost all of the moves, thanx you guys. I just hope next issue comes off as smooth. All of the moves for next issue are due March (3) twenty-fourth (24) 1975. Please get them in!

AR74-U(74-1) L Spring '04

RUS(Nozik)FNwy-Ska/FSTp-Nwy/FSwe-Den/FBalsFSwe-Den/AMos-STp/ABer-Kie
AWar-Sil/FCon-Aeg/AArm-Sev/FSmyH(No such unit. It is ASmyH)
ITA(Stevens)AVen-Rom/Fion-Nap/FEas-Ion
AUS(Kelly)ABohSAMun/AMunSRusABer/FGreSitaFEas-Ion/ATri-Apu/FAdrCATri-Apu
APie-Mar/ASer-Tri/ABul(Unordered)H
GER(Lagerson)ARuhSFKei/FKeiSADen/ADenSFKie/FNthSADen
FRA(Mark Zimmerman, Caltech 1-87, Pasadena, CA 91126) FMidH/FTunH/
FTyr-Nap/AMar-Pie/ABurH
ENG(Griggs NMR)FengH/Firih/AYorH UNDERLINED MOVES FAIL.

PRESS!

"The Kaiser has returned! The Kaiser has returned!" were the cries of the joyful people as they awaited their savior's words of wisdom outside the palace at Kaiserstrasse. At long las, amid the cheering of millions, his GREATNESS most excellent, Great and Superhuman Kaiser David von Lagerson emerged after a long public absence. He spoke: My people (cheers) I am back. (cheers) I am here to lead you out of this deprivation (more cheers) and the word I have is this: I have nothing to offer you but blood sweat and tears! (not so many cheers) We will fight them in the Keil Canal. We will stop them in the Danish Pastry Factories. We will stomp their god damn asses in the Ruhr!(cheers and CHEERS!) and we will never NEVER give up untill all of Germany is rid of the menaces which now mock us with their prescence. My ministers are busy with a new arrangement (you will all notice the heads of the former ministers over there on the fence posts) And now the might and the greatness on the TRUE GERMANY which has, for so long, slept, will return to life and smite the slavic pigs who defile our honored land. (At this the crowd went wild with ecstasy) And now, I must leave you again to make ready the great offensive against those who would usurp the throne. Now peace be with you all and remember our word of the month STOMP A SCUM AND ZAP A CZAR TODAY!!!!"

AR74-3 Winter '02

TUR(Hov FCon-AnR and FAeg-Con succeed.) Fank, FCon, ASmy
ITA(Pawlak)FApu, Fion, FTun, AVen
ENG(Kelly Getstwo builds as he does own Nwy)ADen, FEng, FNor, FNwy, BFLiv
AUS(Griggs)ABul, AGne, FAlb, FTri, ATyr (FAlb-Ion failed last &Fedi
RUS(Roberson)ABer, FBla, ASil, ASer, AGal, AUkr, FBal time)
FRA(Berren)APic, FMid, ABur, ABre, ARuh
GER(Clumm NMR)AKie, AMun, FHol (Missed a build)

Sorry about the spread of moves last time, I ran into trouble.

PRESS!

Ankara-Jan 27, 1903

Dear Austri-Hungary and Russia

Okay...You had me fooled. A great job of acting! I really thought that you two were allies.

It's too bad you gave it away, but if you ever want to get your act together again, I'll be happy to act as a moderator. Just tell me which of your two capitols the negotiations are to take place in, and I will be happy to make the journey there.

Once again, my congratulations on your great play.

— — — — — An amused audience,

— — — — — Ottoman M. Pire

AR74-AB(74-2) Winter '02

— — — — — Turkish Foreign Minister — — — — —

TUR(Chamberlain)ASev, FBla, AGre, Faeg, BACon & AAnk

GER(Kelly, ABel non-existant is supposed to be ABer, only one build)

FDen, ABer, AMun, AHol, BFKie

FRA(Katsoff, still doesn't own Spain so gets on builds) ABel, ABur,

APor, APAr

ENG(Stevens) FMid, FEeng, FNth, ANwy

AUS (Smith) ABud, AGal, ARum (FTri removed)

RUS(Melton)AStp, AWar, FBot

ITA(Bleming) ATrik, ATyr, FWes, FTyr, FIon

AR74-4 Winter '01

ITA(Fischman)BAVen, FNap, ABethlehem(Sorry but your press is lost in the shuffle of moving, I can't read it anyway.)

*TUR(McClendon)BFCon

FRA(Thomas)EBBra, APAr, FMar

AUS(Hertz) BAVie

GER(Baker) No builds

ENG(Berggren) No builds

RUS(Melton) No builds recieved

You may wonder why I didn't recieve any builds from Don when he is right here, the answer is very simple, dumb, but simple. I made very few copies of the last issue of the Briefing Room and I stupidly sent all of them out. I do not have an issue of the last one. I am taking these builds on faith, would somebody please be kind enough to send me last issues finall positions and check the builds with their next moves , and no cheating! I also can't check any mistakes as all of the moves got lost in the process of moving so they will have to stand as is for last issue. (God, how embarrassing.)

* * * * *

EDITORIAL!!!

WE finally got this issue back from the printers. The guy that usually does our printing had the flu so it was done by someone else and he washed out some of the detail on a few of the pages. Like the ~~inner~~ inside cover (that was a screened picture! and the Multigraphix logo looks ten times ~~ann~~ ~~hara~~ better than that. He also washed out all of my zip tones on one page of the pointless tale. Those things are a reall pain to put on.) In the pointless tale, to get it straight The original idea was Don's, I rote the plot, lettered it, and inked all but one panel and layed it out. Don did the sketches and every body gave us ideas, helpful hints and bothered us to no end. You wouldn't believe the problem we had remembering what chico's hat looked like.